

California should take heed of Mr. Grinnell's timely warning and not repeat on the Pacific slope the ever-to-be-regretted folly that was perpetrated in the case of the Passenger Pigeon in the east.— W. S.

**Henshaw's 'Fifty Common Birds of Farm and Orchard.'**<sup>1</sup>— This admirable publication is designed as an 'Educational Leaflet' to aid people, especially in the more remote parts of the country, to become familiar with their more important bird friends. It will undoubtedly reach hundreds of persons who are quite out of touch with more general works on ornithology and do a world of good.

The great desideratum in such a pamphlet *i. e.* colored illustrations which will render unnecessary the tedious and bulky printed description, has been met by fifty excellent color figures from paintings by Fuertes, which are run into the text, two on a page, somewhat after the style of Reed's 'Bird Guide.' The accompanying text which is of necessity very limited is admirably compiled. The length of the bird is given, sometimes with a line or two on color or form; and then come two paragraphs covering 'Range' and 'Habits and Economic Status,' with frequent reference to other publications of the Biological Survey. An introduction of six pages covers forcibly the principles of economic ornithology.

Taken in its entirety we doubt if so much sound ornithology has ever been presented in such a small space and the pamphlet should not only enlist a multitude of recruits in the cause of bird protection but it should develop a number of ornithologists as well. It is to be hoped that this 'Bulletin' will not be allowed to go 'out of print.' Perhaps by coöperation between the Agricultural Department and the Audubon Societies it might be kept always available.— W. S.

**Three Important Economic Reports.**— In this annual report as Chief of the Biological Survey, Mr. H. W. Henshaw<sup>2</sup> presents the usual interesting summary of the work of this important division of the Department of Agriculture. The relation of birds to the Alfalfa and Boll Weevils, and the Chestnut-bark Disease, have been investigated, and publications continued on the food habits of various common birds. The bird-life of Porto Rico and Alabama has been studied as well as the status of the English Sparrow and European Starling and means of trapping the former.

Under importations it is interesting to know that upwards of 457,000 live birds were brought into the United States during the year 1912, of which 362,604 were canaries, 50,086 were game birds and 44,387 non-game birds other than Canaries.

The California Associated Societies for the Conservation of Wild Life<sup>3</sup> have issued a pamphlet entitled 'Western Wild Life Call' which contains

<sup>1</sup> Fifty Common Birds of Farm and Orchard. Farmer's Bulletin 513, U. S. Dept. Agriculture, 1913. pp. 1-31.

<sup>2</sup> Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey for 1912. By Henry W. Henshaw. Annual Reports of the Dept. of Agriculture. 1912. pp. 1-24.

<sup>3</sup> Western Wild Life Call. Published by the California Associated Societies for the Conservation of Wild Life. Feb. 7, 1913. pp. 1-16.

strong articles from the leaders in this movement and direct appeals for the passage of desirable legislation now before the state law-makers. The illustrations and diagrams are striking and convincing.

Mr. E. H. Forbush<sup>1</sup> in his fourth annual report as state ornithologist of Massachusetts, considers bird boxes, English Sparrow traps and the economic importance of certain species of native birds. Most interesting however is the account of the presence of a flight of White Egrets in the state during parts of July and August. Four of the birds were shot and three of the shooters were arrested. With increased protection in the south these visitations should soon be of annual occurrence.—W. S.

#### **Economic Ornithology in Recent Entomological Publications.—**

Since the first investigations of the gypsy moth in the United States birds have been given a greater or less share of the blame for the continued spread of the pest. The evidence that has been brought forward is reviewed by A. F. Burgess in his recent bulletin<sup>2</sup> on 'The Dispersion of the Gypsy Moth' and in summing up he concludes that birds are practically guiltless.

Mr. Burgess takes about the same view of the experimental evidence that birds may distribute gypsy moth eggs, as that expressed by the reviewer in the April, 1911, *Auk* (pp. 285-286). With regard to Collins' experiments on English Sparrows and pigeon he says: "These experiments indicate the extreme improbability of either of these birds selecting gypsy moth eggs for food, and the chances of the insect being disseminated in this way appear very slight" (p. 13). With regard to Reiff's experiments Mr. Burgess says: the "conclusions seem too sweeping because of the large percentage of the eggs [that had passed through the digestive tracts of the birds] that failed to hatch, and when the conditions under which the birds were fed is considered it is doubtful whether comparable result would be secured under natural conditions" (p. 14).

The chances of the dispersion of the moth through the dropping of caterpillars picked up and carried to a distance by birds are considered very remote. Of all the suggested modes of distribution by birds, the only one held at all probable is the carrying of twigs bearing egg clusters, by crows, hawks and other large birds, and the opinion is expressed that although "this may happen in some cases . . . it would result in local rather than long distance dispersion." The final conclusion is that "the evidence is wholly inadequate to prove that birds were responsible for distributing the gypsy moth to the large area which was annually becoming infested" (p. 15). The chief means of the dispersion is the wind which carries about the young larvae. The latter are provided with aerostatic hairs.

Wild birds receive much credit as enemies of locusts in the Philippines.

<sup>1</sup> Fourth Annual Report of the State Ornithologist. By Edward Howe Forbush. Fifty-ninth Annual Rept. State Board of Agriculture. [Mass.] 1912 pp. 1-32.

<sup>2</sup> Bull. 119, U. S. Bureau of Entomology. 1913. 62 pp.